

Steamboat Oak Habitat Improvement Project Proposal

Background

The project area is located within the McAdams Creek Drainage of the Scott River Ranger District on the Klamath National Forest, about 6 miles north of the town of Fort Jones. This project was proposed to the Scott River Fuels department by the CAL Fire Deadwood Inmate Camp. Deadwood crews have treated the fuels within the camp up to the Forest Service property boundary (Township 44 North, Range 9 West, Section 12). Fuel loading conditions on Forest Service lands adjacent to the camp boundary are untreated, decadent, and could result in hazardous conditions to fire fighters in the event of a wildfire. A significant portion of this parcel is oak woodland habitat, the condition of the oak stand is degraded due to severely departed fire return interval resulting in overstocked oak stands, conifer encroachment and decadent brush understory. There is an opportunity to reduce the threat of detrimental wild fire to the Deadwood Inmate Camp and restore and protect Oak woodland habitat with a relatively simple fuels reduction treatment.

Management Direction

The 1995 Klamath National Forest Land and Resource Management Plan (Forest Plan, as amended) includes Standards and Guidelines from the Northwest Forest Plan. The Forest Plan provides forest-wide and Management Area (MA) direction at the project level, as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Management Areas within the project area.

Management Area	Pages in Forest Plan*	Acres within Project Area	Percentage of Project Area
MA 15-4 Partial Retention	167	48.5	60%
MA 10-4 Riparian Reserve	133	31.5	40%

*Page numbers from the July 29, 2010 version of the Forest Plan. Accessed online at <http://www.fs.usda.gov/main/klamath/landmanagement/planning>.

Categorical Exclusions to be utilized:

36 CFR 220.6(e) (6): Timber stand and/or wildlife habitat improvement activities that do not include the use of herbicides or do not require more than 1 miles of low standard road construction.

Project Purpose and Need and Proposed Action

The Purpose of this project is to minimize the threat of damaging wild fire to the CAL Fire Deadwood Inmate Camp by reducing the fuel loading and stand density adjacent to state land and to improve and protect the oak woodland habitat in this parcel.

The need comes from an overabundance of fuel loading in the coniferous timber stand adjacent to the Deadwood camp and an overstocked oak woodland with decadent brush understory and encroaching conifers.

The project would consist of two main components, fuels reduction (about 15 acres) and oak woodland habitat improvement and retention (about 30.5 acres). The fuels reduction component would comprise of understory thinning to increase crown spacing, reduce ladder fuels and remove dead and dying standing trees. Slash, surface fuels, and smaller diameter materials (less than 10 inches in diameter) would be hand piled and burned, or chipped. Snags would be removed as necessary for crew safety and to meet project objectives, Forest Plan Standards and Guidelines for snag retention would be met at the landscape level. Larger fuels (Greater than 10” diameter but less than 20” diameter) may either be burned in piled locations, or could potentially be utilized for firewood. Oak woodland treatments would involve combinations of oak thinning as well as brush and conifer removal. Cut materials in oak stands would be piled and burned. The desired condition is for improved defensible space for the Deadwood Inmate Camp, improved wildlife habitat within the oak woodland, and increased fire resiliency.

Appendix A. Project Area Maps



